

HORIZONS

Office of Cerro Grande Fire Claims



Federal Emergency Management Agency

June 15, 2001

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CONTACT US!

Hours: 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. Monday-Friday
9 a.m. -12 p.m. Saturday

INFORMATION & TELEREGISTRATION: 888-748-1853

EMAIL:
cerrograndenewsletter@fema.gov

WEBSITES:
www.cerrogrande.losalamos.com

www.fema.gov/cerrogrande

CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTERS

Espanola: Johnson Controls Bldg.
1027 N. Railroad

Los Alamos: IT Bldg., 235 Central
Park Square

White Rock: 134 State Road 4

Ombudsman:

Espanola
Veronica Verde
Office: 747-4204
Cell: 505-934-9728

Santa Clara and San Ildefonso
Joseph Hesbrook
Office: 424-5908
Cell: 505-934-9699

**Los Alamos and White Rock
Businesses**
Bill Lehman
Office: 661-3121
Cell: 505-934-9698

**Los Alamos and White Rock
Individuals, M-Th, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.**
Dorothy Hamory
Office: 661-3121
Cell: 505-934-9719

Gov. Martinez Works to Protect Sacred Sites

Since the Cerro Grande Fire more than a year ago that burned about 600 acres of forest on the San Ildefonso Pueblo, Governor Perry Martinez has faced many unexpected challenges. The one that weighs heaviest is the problem of how to protect exposed and damaged sacred sites while the forest goes through decades of recovery.

Perry and tribal elders are working to protect the remaining forest from bark beetle infestation that could spread through surviving trees unless they are properly tended, and will be watchful of floods and contaminated run-off should there be heavy late summer rains.

And yet the Governor says the fire has been an opportunity to improve communication between the tribes and the many local and federal agencies involved in disaster response and recovery. He says the Pueblo has been able to educate government agencies about the importance of involving tribal leaders in all phases of the event from fire-fighting efforts to mitigating against loss of life, or damage to property from future floods and fires.



Perry Martinez

"The fire has caused a lot of heartache to our people," he says. The realization of how much was lost became fully apparent last January during the Pueblo's feast days when members had to travel more than 60 miles to gather ceremonial materials that formerly was collected from the burnt forest.

There was an economic loss since many members of the Pueblo earn their living in arts and crafts, using forest materials and soils.

"We've had grieving, and there needs to be a time to move forward," said Martinez. As he and Pueblo members face the future, they are sure of one thing. "It might be easy for other people to pick up and move after the fire. But we've always been here and we always will be here."

Perry is serving in the second year of his two-year term as Pueblo governor. For 17 years prior to his election, he worked for the Eight Northern Pueblos Council.



Personal Property Worksheet Help Offered

The Office of Cerro Grande Fire Claims, Project Recovery, Interfaith, and the Senior Center's Computer User Group are co-sponsoring computer workshops to make personal property lists easier to complete. The workshop will help claimants to develop the list and help make sure no items are inadvertently left out.

The workshops will be small groups with one-on-one coaching from experts. Those who attend will learn to set up an EXCEL spreadsheet, identify lost items and discover ways to establish the price of lost items, including Internet searches.

To register for a workshop please contact Timara Graves at 661-3121 or 424-5967.

Report Fraud; It Hurts Everyone

Cerro Grande Fire Assistance Act (CGFAA) funds are American taxpayer dollars. This money is available to compensate individuals, businesses, state and local governments and pueblos affected by the fire.

"Unfortunately, there are some individuals who may try to take advantage of this assistance," said Don Erbach, director of the OCGC. "Our responsibility is to be certain these funds go to the true victims of the Cerro Grande fire."

The Office of Inspector General (OIG), an arm of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), aggressively investigates potential fraud. If you see instances of possible fraud, please call the OIG at:

800-323-8603
or
505-424-5919

Cerro Grande Fire Claims Customer Service Centers

Hours: M-F 9 am – 6 pm
Saturday 9-12 noon

Los Alamos
IT Building
235 Central Park Square
661-3121

Espanola
Johnson Controls Bldg.
1027 No. Railroad Ave.
747-4204

White Rock
134 State Rd. 4
672-4020

Fire Loss Claims Now Accepted by Telephone

The Office of Cerro Grande Fire Claims now is accepting fire claims by telephone. To file a Notice of Loss, which is the first step in the claims process, you may call our toll-free number, **1-888-748-1853**.

Teleregistration operators will be available to accept Cerro Grande Notices of Loss from **9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 12 noon on Saturdays**.

The toll-free number is simply an additional customer service option. Paper applications still will be accepted at customer service centers. Telephones also will be provided at the centers for those who would like to file this way but do not have ready access to a phone.

Those who suffered losses from the May 2000 Cerro Grande fire are encouraged to file for compensation as soon as possible. The last date for filing a Notice of Loss is August 28, 2002.

Cerro Grande Compensation Tops \$137.9 million

Individuals\$75,033,478
Businesses\$21,411,078
State and Local Governments\$13,211,503
Tribal Governments	..\$13,030,471
Not-For-Profit\$93,332
Individual Mitigation	..\$231,752
Community Mitigation	\$14,946,156
Total Payments:	\$137,957,770
	As of 6/8/01

How to Reopen a Cerro Grande Claim

Are you concerned that if you close your claim you may not be able to reopen it, if needed? Don't worry.

The following are reasons your claim may be automatically reopened if you have closed your claim and signed the Release and Certification:

- To add mitigation measures.
- For reimbursement of a flood insurance premium paid on or before May 12, 2002.
- You sold your property no later than August 28, 2002 and wish to file for diminution of value.
- Your home replacement cost to rebuild for certain allowable items exceeded your claim amount under the Home Replacement Policy. Some items are precluded for additional compensation.
- You have additional personal property items that were not included in the original Proof of Loss.
- Eligible claimants, who are rebuilding their homes, have additional living expenses.

The Director has discretion to reopen your claim for other reasons if you make a request in writing that includes justification and proper documentation. To request that your claim be reopened write a letter to the Director or complete a "Request to Reopen Claim" form.

You may obtain a "Request To Reopen Your Claim" form at any Service Center, or on our website, www.cerrogrande.losalamos.com